

that we had maintained with our families, our children, and God.

I soon learned that Governor Herbert, in addition to being wise and in addition to being a skilled and valuable statesman, was also a formidable athlete. Right after he and Governor Huntsman were sworn in, the staff got together as a team several times in the Governor's mansion, where we soon discovered there was a ping-pong table in the basement. I then learned the hard way that Governor Herbert's athletic skills, including his ping-pong skills, are off the charts.

While severing Governor Huntsman, I always found Gary to be friendly, approachable, and always willing to tackle every single assignment with eagerness and poise. Whenever Governor Huntsman's schedule became chaotic or changed unexpectedly, which happens in any Governor's office or any Senator's office, for that matter, particularly at certain times of the year, Lieutenant Governor Herbert would routinely be dispatched to speak on Huntsman's behalf, often sending him to remote corners of the State and often at really inconvenient times.

He never once complained. And he was not only willing, but he was always eager and happy. He felt fortunate for the opportunity to help. That is the kind of enthusiasm that the people of the State of Utah have benefitted from for so long as a result of Gary Herbert's service. You see, he has never lost that—not during his entire time as Lieutenant Governor and not during his entire time as Governor. You can tell that he is exactly where he wants to be and that he feels privileged and he has been blessed to be able to serve the people of Utah.

Likewise, whenever there was an issue that needed to be addressed by the Governor, even within the office or around the capitol compound, but where the Governor was unable to meet with the particular group in question, Gary was always assigned to the case. He would meet with, as he described it, all the different stakeholders. He would get together the legislators, county commissioners, citizens from this or that part of the State, lobbyists, lawyers who may have been involved, in addition to other members of Governor Huntsman's administration. He would bring them all in together, and he would wade through all the intricate and often pedestrian details of the matter. You see, he wanted to get to the bottom of the issue. He wanted to understand it. What is more, he had the skill of figuring out the best path forward for all parties involved and for making everyone feel heard and understood. If ever, whenever, there was a way to achieve a win-win, Gary found it, and he brought people to it, and they were always grateful as a result.

The same traits that I saw in him as Lieutenant Governor would go on to make him an effective and beloved Governor himself. In office now as Governor since 2009, Gary Herbert is cur-

rently the Nation's longest serving Governor, and our State has seen exciting achievement and tremendous prosperity with Governor Herbert at the helm.

In the last 8 years, Utah has seen continued, steady growth in our economy, with improvements in our GDP, number of jobs, and unemployment rate. We have seen the boom of Silicon Slopes. We celebrated the sesquicentennial of the driving of the Golden Spike, when it was an honor to stand alongside Governor and Mrs. Herbert at that celebratory reenactment.

On that particular occasion, Governor Herbert and his wife Jeanette showed their characteristic enthusiasm by arriving in their finest 1869 apparel just to commemorate the moment, and it made all the difference. It made it all feel much more authentic.

So, too, was it an honor to join Gary when President Trump came to Utah to announce his decision to shrink the Bears Ears National Monument, when we could all stand together and celebrate the fact that someone in Washington had heard our concerns within the State and saw fit to redraw the boundaries in a manner more compatible with local interests and concerns.

Through his enthusiasm and his zeal, Gary Herbert has championed our State and the things that we stand for. He has done so very consistently and very enthusiastically. He can rattle off figures and metrics about Utah at the drop of a hat. I am convinced this man can do it in his sleep and do so infectiously and persuasively. And he is a compelling spokesman for our State's values.

His spirit has helped Utah to attract talent and investment not only from throughout the United States but from throughout the world and to make it the good place that it is to live.

Not only that, but Gary has been an instrumental partner in supporting initiatives that reflect and strengthen the values of our State. To champion the reclamation of our lands, he signed into law the Utah Transfer of Public Lands Act. He also signed into law innovative criminal justice reforms in Utah. He was at the cutting edge of that movement, making a far-reaching impact across our State and that ended up having impacts elsewhere.

In fact, his work in Utah in criminal justice reform helped pave the way for the work that Congress and President Trump were able to achieve at the Federal level through the passage of the First Step Act.

He has been a strong supporter of Utah's family culture and was helpful in the Senate's work promoting the child tax credit during our tax reform discussions just 3 years ago.

On a more personal note, Gary Herbert also had the wisdom to put my brother Tom on the Utah Supreme Court. In so doing, he has been a champion for textualism, the notion that judges are there to interpret the law based on what the law says, rather

than on the basis of what it might have said.

For all of his public achievements, Gary is perhaps most proud and always most conscious of and most aware of and most concerned about his own role as a husband, as a father, and as a grandfather. Gary and his wife Jeanette have 6 children together, as well as 16 grandchildren, and he is known to encourage them to "follow in his footsteps and marry up."

In a myriad of ways, Governor Herbert has been a champion and a spokesman for all that is good about our State. It has been an honor to serve the people of Utah with him, and I wish Governor Herbert and his wife Jeanette all the best as they embark on the next chapter of their lives together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Soskin nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UGANDA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise with grave concern to speak about the troubling political situation in Uganda in the runup to that country's elections on January 14 and to call on President Museveni to take immediate action to stop the country's downward political spiral.

Uganda has been an important if not critical security and counterterrorism partner to the United States for well over a decade, playing a prominent role in the African Union's Mission to Somalia and hosting over 1.4 million refugees. Its leadership and influence in East Africa and the African continent writ large is difficult to overstate. However, these are troubling times in Uganda, and longstanding efforts to advance its democracy are now in peril.

National elections in Uganda have not met internationally accepted standards for free and fair polls since 1996, when they were held for the first time after a long-running conflict that brought President Museveni to power. For decades, Museveni's ruling National Resistance Party, NRM, has leveraged access to and influence over